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ABSTRACT

Changes in the social organization and context of education were studied in a rural Illinois school district experiencing a rapid influx of Hispanic students. The local meatpacking plant closed, then reopened under a new name and began an aggressive campaign to recruit immigrant and migrant workers who would work for lower wages. In the next 3 years, the number of Mexican American families in the area grew rapidly, and the number of Hispanic students in the schools went from a few to over 180 (out of 1,100 total students). In addition, there was considerable student mobility, as families migrated in and out of the area. The school personnel were unprepared for this sudden change, and many pedagogical and classroom changes were made on an emergency basis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 33 teachers (41 percent of the preK-12 staff) and 3 administrators. All but one had lived their whole lives in the area. The interviews investigated educators' beliefs and attitudes that would function to separate or integrate student ethnic groups, and identified practices that promoted social inclusion. Themes included initial resistance to bilingual education and other changes necessitated by the new students, who were often viewed as "temporary"; initial animosity toward and gradual acceptance of new bilingual staff; some teachers' efforts to influence student attitudes; easier social integration in the elementary grades; conflict resolution between groups of secondary students; special programs for migrant students and their parents; inservice teacher education on intercultural communication and establishing communities of learners; and purposeful attention to the dynamics of social justice. (Contains 29 references.) (SV)

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The social organization of diversity: The changing faces in rural America

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Introduction

A child's sense of belonging, literacy acquisition and success in school are interrelated aspects of her/his cultural, social, linguistic and political histories (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). The sociocultural interactions along with the languages heard and spoken in the affective domains of children as they interact with teachers and students are central to the ways in which children use speech and define their social space, and contributes to their sense of belonging to and identity with the communities of learners in the social organization of school. A student population of diverse social, economic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds contributes to a complex pluralistic organization of the social context.

This paper presents a research project that investigated and documented the social organization and context of education within the school system of a small, rural community in Illinois. The research describes the changes, past and on-going, of a community that experienced an influx of Hispanic migrant and migrant workers as a result of a shift in the hiring practices of a major agribusiness located nearby. The school personnel were not aware of the impending influx, nor were they advised as to what to expect, or how they should respond once the arrival of the worker's children began. Much of the pedagogical, material, classroom and faculty changes were made on an emergency basis as the number of limited-English-proficient (LEP) and/or monolingual Spanish-speaking students grew from a few in August of 1996 to over one hundred eighty within those first two years. The number of Spanish speaking students in this small, rural school now constitutes 23% of the 1100 students, PreK-12, and continues to climb. Most of the students were immigrants from Mexico or children of migrant Hispanic workers from Texas. These demographic changes created a need for the School District to find ways to meet the social and the educational needs of a growing minority population.

The premise of the project was that the globalization of our world's economic and political activity affects the sociocultural environment in which teachers work; it is becoming increasingly diverse. This activity necessarily increases the diversity of students and the directive forces within the schools which greatly alters the social context wherein teachers and students come together to do the business of School. A direct consequence of the changing demographics was a major change in the social context of the small, rural community and of the schools, precipitating a desperate need to (re)organize the social climate where children and teachers could function best.

The purpose of my study was to investigate the grounded beliefs and attitudes of the teachers and administrators which contributed to the social organization of the school that would prescribe and support a pluralistic context wherein the newcomers could thrive, and the learning and the enculturation processes could proceed. The district personnel sought to avoid marginalizing the new students by facilitating their inclusion in the student body and the local schools, and by organizing and structuring contexts where they could socially integrate and achieve academically. The major question guiding this research was: How do the belief systems and the perceptions of the teachers and administrators function to separate or work to integrate the two cultural groups through purposeful structuring of the social context? In this paper, I will present how the particular ideologies held by the school personnel, along with the planned reorganization of the sociocultural contexts, exerted influences on

the acculturation and the socialization processes of the Mexican migrant and immigrant children as a fundamental part of their schooling. I will discuss how the cultural world views of the district personnel and their planned activities functioned: 1) to organize programs and processes to ameliorate the social conflict; and 2) to bring the two student groups together in ways that facilitated the socialization processes of both groups in becoming members of their new, diverse community. A critical and compounding factor to the inclusion of, for and by the migrant and immigrant students was the frequency in which they migrated in and out of the community and schools. It implied an ethos of temporality to the contextual changes.

I begin with a discussion of the theoretical constructs of socialization processes, the dynamics of language central to those processes, and then give a brief overview of the economic and demographic situation in the region and how that is significant for the community. Following the results of analysis, I conclude with implications for schools and their personnel, and some suggestions for further research.

Theoretical Frame

A Global Perspective of Socialization

In most societies throughout the Western sector, and especially in America, socializing agents such as parents, peers, relatives and teachers are important influences on identity formation, especially among adolescents (Eckert, 1988). As teenagers work to shape their own social order, they change their appearances, attitudes and language to construct an identity which will be a comfortable fit and orient with their peer groups; a group they chose to align with or to establish. The formation of an identity is an interrelatedness of internal experiences and external experiences within the child's ecology. Students of immigrant parents have the added difficulty of maintaining adherence to traditional ways to retain their familial relationships, while adopting or adjusting to the norms of their new social contexts in schools. Their newly re-formed identities and environments most generally are different than their old social orders and their identities which previously existed at home. This process is continuing and is subjected to influences throughout a person's life span within the social environment (Sampson, 1985).

Through the sharing of knowledge, language and experiences, children develop a sense of belonging. This sense of shared experiences is characteristic of ethnic identity, however, "differences in cultural backgrounds produce differences in both cognitive patterns and forms of social interaction. Moreover, these patterns have a different meaning in situations where cultures exist in isolation from others, in contrast with situations in which the individuals are being socialized in traditional cultural patterns as part of a minority group within a larger society" (De Vos, 1980, p. 112-113).

In the United States the situation is primarily of non-isolated cultural and ethnic groups however separated they may appear to be socially and geographically. The processes of ethnic socialization are socially bounded to specific situations and have referential contents which index specific ethnic and cultural world views (Heath, 1983; Mahmood & Armstrong, 1992).

In sum, the identity an individual constructs is derived from personal, social and cultural influences, and the relationships between the individual, the language and the society. Whether viewed from the perspective of individual agency or as organized by society, the routinized, intersubjective and subrosa aspects of identity and role construction through the presentation of Self in the face to face interactional process characterizes the processes people and societies employ in the formation of identities. The more complex the social climate, the more complex the processes of socialization will be. In schools, the usual social climate is typically constituted by an array of SES, and by linguistic and cultural differences in increasing instances. The social organization of diversity in schools is constituted through the referential frames of sociolinguistic interaction, the processes of identity formation, and within the affective domains of classrooms and hallways.

The Centrality of Language to Socialization

Theories have been developed about the relationship of language to cognition, social processes, transmission of culture and the shaping of reality and behavior (Ochs, 1990; Schieffelin, 1990; Spindler, 1974). Taking a social interactionist viewpoint in relation to the ways language is used in schools for the socialization of students to the norms of the school, sociolinguists contend that language is the medium through which ideas are exchanged and developed (Sotomayor, 1977). The talk in and out of classrooms conveys messages about a student's inclusion in the education process by the way it is used, the things that are talked about, the organization of the talk, the experiences of and within the talk, the domains where particular types of talk are used and by whom. The interactive nature of language conveys and depicts a way of being which informs the student experientially about the expectations of her/his ecology (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986).

Experiences with language may include power relationships, status differentiation, institutionalization, coping strategies, imposition and discrimination, control, exclusion, solidarity, boundaries of in-groups and out-groups, a sense of belonging, familial organization, official designation, autonomy, and opportunities to participate in the affairs of the society (Schieffelin, 1987). In some school communities, small enclaves of ethnic groups can coexist and yet can enculturate and socialize to the norms of the school through differential language use (Heath, 1983).

With an increasingly pluralistic society such as ours, the speech events within public schools are quite often the scenes of encounters where "judgments of performance and of ability, that on the whole are quite reliable when [students and teachers] share the same background, may tend to breakdown" (Gumperz, 1982, p. 2). The unfortunate reality of these situations is that with more and prolonged instances of interethnic contact, the difficulties and misunderstandings do not abate. Over time these obstacles compile into characterizations of stereotyped identities which in the end can lead to greater misunderstandings and reinforcement of stereotypes of the other person (John, 1972; McCarty, Wallace, Lynch, & Benally, 1991; Philips, 1972, 1983).

The Rural Community Context

Between 1980 and 1990, the Midwest experienced a rise in Hispanic population of 800,000. Mexicans accounted for nearly three-quarters of that growth, with nearly 300,000 of the population growth occurring in the state of Illinois (Aponte & Siles, 1997). The new workers eventually bring their wives and children into the community, and consequently into the local school system.

Recent trends and demographics clearly indicate that a significant population of the migrant labour force is now working in the mega meat packing industry (Martin, Taylor & Fix, 1996). Immigrants working in these Midwestern meat packing plants can make between $12,000 and $18,000 per year; enough to support a family in the U. S. This is more than twice as much as seasonal farm workers can earn. By association, the increased earning power is accompanied by significant societal changes. It signifies more families and extended family units as opposed to solo male workers. This increase in population and the inclusion in the family organization necessarily requires attention in many areas of a community experiencing these changes (i.e., social services, education, health care, housing).

The number of LEP students attending schools in this county at the end of this century was projected to reach 3.4 million (Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs, 1991). Within this context of increasing linguistic and cultural diversity, literate and oral fluency in English remains the major focus in our schools and in our society (Au, 1995). With greater expectations for learning in content knowledge as students progress through the grades levels, students must construct meanings increasingly in cognitively demanding and context-reduced domains (Cummins, 1994). For LEP students, the learning and instruction is not in their home language, therefore, they must necessarily rely on their individual reading comprehension abilities as the sole means to understand content area materials in textbooks (Anderson & Roit, 1996). In high school, the literacy discontinuities that students encounter serve as barriers to their achievement thereby provoking mistrust of the education system and school-leaving (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). In addition to differences in background knowledge and language proficiency (Jimenez, Garcia & Pearson, 1996), teachers' abilities to handle diversity of language and cultures is a contributing factor. Most teachers have had little or no training and preparation in bilingual and/or bicultural education, or in methods for teaching English as a second language (ESL) (Hamayan, 1990).

Small, rural schools are perhaps the least able to cope with or to respond to such situations (Coleman, 1986; Jacobson, 1988), yet the challenges to meet the increasing diversity in classrooms in every region of our country necessitates the development of empirically-based programs of intervention to enhance bilingual instruction and English literacy acquisition that leads to increased content area learning for all students (Fitzgerald, 1995). Furthermore, recent trends in patterns of migrant workers' wage-labour habits (Crump, 1998) exacerbate the need for research data on the effectiveness of immigrant children to meet the demands of American schools (Portes, 1994; Portes & MacLeod, 1996).

A fundamental part of schooling LEP and/or monolingual Spanish speaking students, then, is the establishment of a context that utilizes their social, cultural and linguistic capital (Moll, 1990). For example, the use of their home language in the school setting contributes to their academic achievement and to their socialization to the culture of the Euro-American schools. Neglect of the native language, or its suppression, reduces the students'

sense of belonging and acceptance. No matter the students' backgrounds, a social climate of acceptance and understanding is extremely important to the constructive achievement and positive attitudes towards education.

Method

Participants

Participants included thirty three teachers (41% of the PreK-12 staff) and three administrators (two principals, one superintendent: 60% of the administrators). Except for one of the principals, all of the other participants were originally from the community. They were born and raised there, they received their teaching degrees from the nearby university and returned to the community to teach in the school system. There were approximately 1,100 students in the PreK-12 system. The Kindergarten and Preschool were in separate buildings from the 1-12 grade students. The superintendent's office was across the street from the 1-12 complex. The Kindergarten and PreK buildings were located several blocks away.

The community was sited in a rural and historically agrarian community in the west central portion of Illinois. It was adjacent to the Illinois River which affected its growth and commercial activity since its founding. A major, national agribusiness employed non farmland, unskilled and semi-skilled labourers from the community and from the migrant population in the meat packing plant. The plant was sited on the fringe of the community and was in existence for more than twenty years at the time of this study.

Data & Collection

Semi-structured interviews for each of the thirty six participants were conducted in a conversational framework, recorded and transcribed, then coded using the software Ethnograph. An interview protocol of 25 questions was used for each of the teachers, and a similar protocol of 8 questions was used for each of the administrators. Classroom observations were conducted to note the teachers' pedagogies and instructional paradigms, and to inform the interview data regarding the teachers' and the administrators' implied statements. On occasion, follow-up interviews were necessary to clarify and amplify certain points in the conversations.

Approach to Analysis

An inductive analysis was conducted to discover the themes and the patterns of interaction as well as the themes mentioned across participants regarding the effects of a language policy. Based on the interview protocols and the initial reading of the transcripts I identified the following primary categories that reflected the themes and topics discussed by most or all of the participants: *Demographic Changes; Current and Future Needs; Policy Directives; Faculty Responses; Interaction with Parents & Students; Support - financial, social, cultural, emotional;* and, *Characteristics of Students.* As I reread the transcripts, certain constructs emerged as common factors to the primary categories. Subcategories were assigned to the primary categories to define the cross-linked themes of the participants that were embedded in the transcripts and in the interview protocols: *language issues; program issues;*

culture; socialization; cognition; and *family*. These constructs contributed to the content of this portion of the analysis of the project.

Results of Analysis

Community Context

This small, rural community historically was a stable, agrarian region populated by farmers and multiple generations of kinfolk. With the small number of residents, it was very obvious when new people, or "strangers" as they were categorized, arrived. Ethnically, the population was Euro-American with an occasional minority who did not stay long. The region is ultra conservative and typically has a Republican perspective with a heightened sense of religious morality. One teacher/resident for sixty years, typified this community with this remark: "I can remember Jesse Owens coming and speaking at a banquet here. They would not let him sleep overnight in this town. He had to go to Springfield."

The pivotal factor that set the course for the arrival of minorities to the community stemmed from the hiring practices of the meat packing plant located on the outskirts of the community. The plant suddenly closed ostensibly because of impending bankruptcy, only to reopen three months later under the name of a subsidiary of the parent company which was a multinational corporation. They began an aggressive campaign to recruit migrant and immigrant workers who would work for a much reduced wage. Several of the towns people rehired at the plant, but many voiced the opinion that "they're going to take our jobs." Most of the former employees who refused to work for the reduced wages sought employment elsewhere, and many took an early retirement. In reality, employment at the plant was available because many of the community members did not want the positions. The migrant and immigrant workers came to the community, then, because of the availability of wage-labour.

The tensions rose and the Hispanic workers continued to arrive to work in the packing plant. There were several incidents of hostilities that resulted from the clashing of the two disparate cultural groups. Much of the interaction was the product of fear of the Other/differences predicated on misunderstandings, or simply from not knowing anything about the new community, on the part of the Hispanics, or about the newcomers, on the part of the community members. The tensions climaxed with the murder of an Anglo by a Mexican man who immediately fled to Mexico. That incident precipitated the burning of a tavern recently opened by a Mexican. A house was burned where a large group of single migrant workers lived, and other houses were burglarized.

One week after the murder outsider groups and organizations entered the community to exacerbate the situation and to garner support for discrimination activities and attitudes. In the neighboring county only a few miles away, the Ku Klux Klan held a convocation rally that lasted for two days. The timing of the rally coincided with a regional event that typically drew thousands of tourists from around the central part of the state. The Klan purposefully entered the community and left leaflets on doorsteps, and on one particular occasion carried out a demonstration, in the form of a cross burning, in the community just a week after the murder and the tavern burning. These activities heightened the prejudicial attitudes within the social milieu of this small community and of nearby communities. The school administrators and many of the teachers were concerned with the opening of the school

that fall. There was an increased effort on behalf of the local police and the sheriff's department to patrol the community, yet to do so unobtrusively and more often than usual.

The resentment ran high, and the teachers expressed their beliefs that there was not much they could do in the community to ameliorate the situation.

> There was a lot of community problems going on at the time. Things that you just couldn't control, and it kind of gave a lot of people a sour taste in their mouth. [Following the murder]... there was a lot of tension in the community.... I don't think it's as bad as it was, though. There is a lot more acceptance this year.

The Klan activities functioned as a final signal to the community that they had a choice to make. As one principal noted, they could either turn down the path of extreme prejudice and violence, or they could accept that their community had indeed changed dramatically in several short months, and begin to rebuild their stability through acceptance of the change and the new residents. Once these explosive events were past, the community began to calm, to exhibit an attitude of tolerance in general and of acceptance in several instances. Business leaders started working with the Hispanic population. One bank sent two of its tellers to the after school classes of Spanish Langauge instruction organized to help the teachers begin to communicate on a basic level with their migrant and immigrant students. One of the local churches established a very intense after school and evening program to work with the new students and with the parents. Tutors were available to assist the students with their studies, and to teach ESL classes to the parents. The ministerial alliance began an active program of providing resources and services that would contribute to the socialization process of the migrant and immigrant families. The Nazarene church provided after-school programs that supported the students' academic work, and English language classes for the adults to assist in their integration to the community. The local Catholic church instituted a regularly scheduled mass in Spanish. The local policing authority attempted to hire interpreters to assist them in their official capacities. Teachers believed that these actions were important beginnings to soothe the social interactions, but were realistic in acknowledging the long journey towards a wholly integrated community was just beginning.

There remained pockets of overt resentment and prejudice, however. For example, finding housing for one of the new Hispanic teachers was quite difficult. He arranged over the telephone to rent a house, but upon arriving with his belongings to secure his new quarters and begin his work in the schools, he found this situation:

> This person had a house and I said, "Does it have running water?" the basics. I had not taken a look at the house. I said, well I'll take it and she said OK I'll hold it for you. I was basing myself on that verbal agreement. I sent her a check and then when I got [there] she says, well this guy that works as a parole officer came here and, since I'd never seen her she says, "We don't rent to your kind." And I said, "What kind would that be?" And she says, "You know." And I said, "No I don't know. Why don't you tell me."

His arrangement and agreement to rent was not honored, so he sought the assistance of his new employer. The superintendent telephoned a few contacts and eventually found a house. One factor that contributed to the on-

going resistance and exacerbated the difficulties for the new arrivals to find housing was that the community published a weekly paper, but rentals were not part of their classified section. The availability of rentals was passed by word of mouth which afforded them opportunities to either facilitate the acceptance of the migrant workers, or to act as barriers to their integration into the community.

The elementary principal noted that the tense social climate was beginning to moderate in the community towards a tolerance of the migrant and immigrant families. She remarked that a contributing factor was seeing the young families with their children, young children walking about the town, and young couples on the streets and in the churches. The familiarity of activities such as these supported a growing consciousness among the community that people have commonalties and social habits that can connect them with disparate societies in many different contexts. One teacher remarked that the migrant families do indeed contribute to the community in many ways, and do not present an undue burden or hardship on the community's resources: "I don't see that many of them holding their state card out getting their groceries. I see them holding out dollar bills."

It should be noted that these events typify the cycles and patterns found in other communities that experience occasional immigration, or those agrarian communities that experience a yearly influx of migrant workers. The cycle begins with single, male workers who take the marginal jobs that are avoided by the permanent residents. They are evidenced forming lines at the post office on paydays to purchase money orders to send "home," and then depart in groups, usually on foot or in one old pickup truck. As the patterns continue, some migrants settle in the areas and purchase houses and other possessions that signify permanency.

The high levels of agitation and tension felt over the summer abated as the fall approached. The superintendent remarked that he "didn't think any parents pulled their students out [of fall enrollment]. And [he] would maybe in this community expect more.... because there's stupidity and intolerance from some people." However, the apprehensions of the teachers and the administrators that parents would not send their children to school proved to be unfulfilled. Parents did send their children to school, signaling that they acknowledged that the migrant families were in their community for the long term, and that they were prepared to move forward with the socialization processes of adjusting to the new demographics in the community and in the school.

School Context

When those first few Hispanic students matriculated in the fall of 1994, they were on the periphery of the community in one of the elementary schools located several miles east of the town. There was talk in the community that more Hispanic students were coming, but nothing official was cited. Unidentified persons in the community attempted to bring this to the attention of the school, but the administration was reluctant to take any action. Because the teachers were natives of the community, they heard the predictions and the foretelling of the impending changes.

> We were being told, and I don't know who, but people in the community were telling the school that there would be more Hispanic students coming in, and to prepare for that.... The administration didn't tell me, but I know there was talk to get ready.... Out at [the elementary school], we really

> didn't know what was going on and we just thought, oh, you know, we will learn a little bit of Spanish, or something. We really didn't stop to think about how it would effect us.

Two years later a formal PreK class with nineteen Hispanic students was organized in that elementary school. In the fall of 1997 there were an estimated 150 to 170 students attending throughout the four schools of the district. Currently, the Hispanic students constitute approximately 23% of the 1100 students enrolled.

One of the socializing agents organized by the PreK school was a planned program of "parenting classes" primarily for the Hispanics. The principal of the school characterized it as "intervention" aimed at fulfilling several of the responsibilities that the young parents in general, and especially the Euro-Americans, did not take for a variety of reasons. She noted that "by default we are picking up the pieces. And if we teach the parents [how to be good parents] along the way, maybe we'll have fewer pieces to pick up." The curriculum included information about schooling as a system in the U. S., and especially in the community; how to access the resources of the schools; the variety of social services available and how to contact the different agencies; and, how to enculturate into the community. All parents who had children in the PreK school were required to attend these classes which were held in the late mornings to accommodate those who typically worked the second or third shift at the meat packing plant.

A fundamental part of many migrant students' realities is that they are in a continual state of migration, not staying in any one community longer than circumstances allow or conditions dictate. Although the packing plant offered sustained employment, there was a certain amount of migration among the families in and out of the community due to the nature of the work, and to the habits of the workers. For instance, as the winter approached, several of the families left, not wanting to endure the chill of a Mid-Western winter. As some families left for warmer climates, others migrated into the community. This had its affects on the social context and the instructional programs of the schools.

The ebb and flow of students necessitated constant alterations to the plans and the pedagogies of many of the affected teachers. When new students arrived after the fall start-up, they were screened for language abilities, content knowledge and other education criteria. The school personnel made grade and classroom assignments based on the student's evaluations, and on a teacher's willingness and ability to handle those certain criteria. Most teachers saw this as a disruption to their pedagogies, to the stability of their classroom's social context, and to their ability to maintain the scope and sequence of the curriculum. They believed that since these students were temporary, staying a week or two, or for several months at best, then they need not invest considerable amounts of energy and time helping them with their studies, or in altering the structure and organization of their classrooms. A few teachers, though, saw these new students as opportunities to hone their pedagogies, to infuse diversity into their classrooms, and to challenge their regular students to establish a community of learners in a true Vygotskian sense. These teachers often requested that the migrant students be sent to their rooms, and were more likely to take advantage of the Spanish Language classes after school. The social context of these classrooms afforded the

migrant students opportunities to integrate into the culture and the social milieu of the school at least on the micro level of their classrooms, if not on the macro level of the school per se. (This is delineated further, below.)

While the migration of students and families in and out of the community and the schools predisposed the teachers to view them as temporary, and to not be too concerned with their educational difficulties, the students, too, felt that they were seen as temporary, whether or not they actually were. As such, the students noted that the teachers would not take time to interact with them more than on a superficial level. They understood that many of the teachers thought that it was futile to invest much time and energy to work with a migrant student because s/he would just disappear one day and not be seen in classes again. The migrant students often experienced this same attitude in their social interactions with many of the Euro-American students, too. Consequently, they were marginalized in their classrooms by the teachers' preconceived notions about the efficacy of investing in them, and by their peers in the hallways and outside of school based on similar attitudes and biases.

Teachers' Perspectives, Attitudes & Strategies

The nature of undergoing change necessarily requires an acknowledgment, on a macro level, that the status quo or the conditions are no longer viable to carry out the functions of the institution. On a personal level, one must admit that the conditions for existence no longer meet the criteria for sustainable conduct. When changes are imposed upon institutions or on individuals who disavow the need for change, then there is a measure of resistance that can take the form of simply refusing to alter one's behavior or conduct, or it can take the extreme most often experienced in the form of prejudice and bigotry. Within the community and consequently within the schools there existed an extreme attitude of prejudice and bigotry among a few of the faculty that was reported by certain of the consultants. One teacher in particular, a long standing resident of the community openly characterized the resistant attitudes and comments.

> I know there was friction at first; and there was prejudice and there was bigotry. 'We don't want them here. Why should we? I'll tell you what if we went to Mexico they wouldn't bring in aides to teach us.... Why do we have to? If they can't speak it, go back to their own country.'... As with anything that's new and unfamiliar, you feel that way because it's a disruption of what you know and who you are and where you are within that community.

One teacher stated that if someone had asked him ten years before now if the staff would be so diverse, he would have said no. Likewise, he would not have imag ied such diversity among the students, nor could he have imagined the changes that happened so suddenly. Part and parcel of rapid change is that those involved are not afforded the opportunity to reflect on those changes beforehand, and to prepare for the challenges to the status quo. Professional jealousy became a factor in several of the faculty relationships, especially between the new bilingual faculty and the well established teachers. One of the new bilingual teachers was awarded a teacher of the month honor, but there was much dissatisfaction with such events. The more established teachers believed that the new faculty, and this teacher in particular, were being highlighted at the expense of the Euro-American teachers who

were having to deal with language and cultural issues in their classrooms, a position that many believed was more demanding of their professional expertise and practical experiences. This animosity carried beyond just the obvious awards into the day to day praxis. As one bilingual teacher stated, he was criticized for exhibiting new approaches:

> I sit up there in the mornings and I praise the kids. I say, "You look nice. Give it all you got today," and high fives. And teachers, like, they might look at me like, how immature, how unprofessional .... And all I'm trying to do is hype them up so that when they get to the classroom, they are good to go.

His intention was to establish a social climate that would bolster the Hispanic students' confidence in their ability to achieve in those classrooms where the teachers had no Spanish language facility, and no interpreters to help them work with the migrant students.

On the other hand, he was able to build some strong relationships with about half the faculty. He was able to request materials, to borrow manipulatives and to seek advice as a colleague. At times a group would meet at a restaurant to discuss methods, materials and other strategies to meet the needs of the Hispanic students. This drew further criticism, though, because he was a single person meeting with married faculty members outside of the school context.

Resistance to the changes and to the new students was found among many of the faculty to a greater and lesser extent. Attitudes about bilingualism were primarily based on hearsay, editorials in the community's weekly paper, or on hallway conversations. Some faculty were very direct in positing their beliefs, often times presenting bilingual faculty with articles clipped from news magazines and from the local and regional newspapers. The viewpoints of the articles ranged as wide as the continuing national debates over the need for bilingual programs and the efficacy of any one of the myriad programs to teach English. The mixed views at the national level, then, mirrored the mixed views at this local level. The dearth of information grounded in research and proven programs concerning bilingualism, bilingual students and programs contributed to the social climate of the faculty relations. Most of the regular teaching faculty did not understand the objectives and the goals of the bilingual program as it was instituted in their schools. Several of the bilingual teachers expressed cautious concerns that the rhetoric of the editorials and of the hallways would somehow become the factual basis for further development of materials and programs for the Hispanic students.

Except for the very resistant teachers, many of the faculty believed that it was their professional duty to provide the best social and academic opportunities for all of their students. How this was actually exhibited in their individual classrooms, though, showed that many teachers resisted the changes. One of the more adaptable teachers expressed that her objective was to keep "... alert and abreast of what's going on with the kids in your classroom, and [try] to keep a cohesive group. And even though you've got all these different individuals, [you should try] to keep them together and working together, and learning to get along." She believed that it was not just the faculty that was confronted with the developing changes, but the students in the schools were also a part of the equation for promoting a social climate that would foster the achievement and progress of all individual students regardless of

their ethnicity, culture and background experiences. She often times needed to intercede in her students' efforts to adjust, noting that "[this community] is typically just all White, good old river boys, that aren't willing to add culture to this, and I'm sure things are said at home, because you hear the kids bring stuff back." In general, many of the teachers reported that the community was always prejudiced towards strangers and especially to persons not of Euro-American decent.

Several of the teachers expressed this position, but also believed that there was not much they could do to change the attitudes of the parents. Conversely, they believed that they could have a significant effect on the biased attitudes of their Euro-American students, and that they set that as one of their continuing goals.

> I can't change the parents' minds. I'd like to, but I can't. But I can change these kids' minds and if they understand that 'Hey, they are just like us. They speak different. I can learn their language just as quickly as they can learn mine.' Why, isn't that the starting bridge?

This socialization agenda for some of the teachers who believed that changing the children's minds and attitudes was key to the integration of both cultural groups, characterized their efforts as "cultural blending." They saw themselves as the facilitators of this process, but understood that the impetus was ultimately upon the students to forge those relationships that would enculturate the new students into the milieu of the school. One contributing factor to the process was the fact that the economic status of many of the non migrant students was not dissimilar to that of the migrant students. This was so because the rural, agrarian regions of this nation typically have a high incidence of low income families, on average, due to the nature of agribusinesses. Another intervening factor was the faculty's aggressive program for stemming the misconduct of students espousing prejudicial attitudes and voicing disparaging remarks. One teacher commented that such attitudes and intolerance was dealt with summarily and quickly.

> I think one time this past fall; I had one kid in one class that's cocky.... He made some comment one day and I said, 'That'll be enough. I'm not going to tolerate it.' He's never dared say it again, which surprised me.... I think most teachers have done that if that type of situation arose. Anyhow, I know the administration has taken that position. We're not going to put up with this.

There was a belief among many of the faculty that the younger students seemed to be able to socially integrate and achieve academically more readily than the older students. One librarian attested to the fact that the primary children were making great strides acculturating to the school and socially integrating with their classmates. A fundamental part of this success was predicated on acquiring language facilities in English and in Spanish. Initially the bilingual program was grounded in a transition model for the elementary and older students, but the PreK and K students were provided with a maintenance model of language learning. An immersion paradigm was proposed at one time, but the superintendent did not support that model of instruction. One high school administrator remarked that the migrant children coming in as early primary students had the opportunity to become truly bilingual, and to acculturate into the norms of the school. She expressed a deep concern, however, for the

occasional student who matriculated as a junior or senior according to age, but had achieved only one or two years of schooling in Mexico. These students presented the greatest challenges to the schools in terms of placement and instruction. Such students were marginalized in their classrooms and often remained as such, waiting for their sixteenth birthday when they could legally leave school and apply for wage-labour positions.

Another factor that regulated the social integration was the mobility of the students. Many non migrant students in the high school had vehicles and could afford to leave campus at the noon hour. They had the financial means to lunch at one of the two fast-food establishments, and went quite regularly with their friends. While many social cliques were formed around such activities and opportunities, many students, both migrant and non migrant, did not have that level of resources and so were site bound for the noon hour. These students lunched in the school's cafeteria, either purchasing the cooked meal, or eating sack lunches from home. In the cafeteria there was very little integration between the two cultural groups, especially among the boys. However, several of the girls intermingled and seemed to engage in such interaction regularly. In the hallways, though, the inclusion was not so evident.

On the other hand, the elementary grades appeared to be much more socially integrated than was the case in the Junior/Senior high. In the primary grades, they more readily accepted the new students as equals, and were eager to teach them the rules of the classroom and of the school as the opportunities arose. There, the students easily formed partners or joined into groups for their lessons. Quite interestingly, the elementary students behaved typically for young children of this age group, preferring to work in single gender groups, or with a same gender partner. The students in the intermediate grades were more reserved, but eventually formed a comfortable association with the migrant students. Throughout the elementary grades, the students were observed offering assistance to each other when individual seat work was assigned. They would readily answer questions from a classmate, or not be inhibited about asking questions about the work. On the play ground the intermediate children were less inclined to integrate than in the classrooms, but the primary children behaved outside similarly as when they were in the classrooms. This was more obvious when migrant students matriculated later in the year.

Contributing to the social climate and the processes of acculturation to the community and to the school were the plethora of special programs particularly designed for the migrant students. In the schools and in the community these programs were widely known and discussed. Mostly, though, the discussions focused on the advantages the migrant students were given over the non migrant students, suggesting that there should be more equity in the distribution of the resources throughout the school population. One example that particularly rankled the locals was the bussing of the migrant students following the after-school study program for migrant students. Many of the migrant families could not find housing in the community proper, causing them to seek accommodations in neighboring communities a few miles away. What the locals did not voice, or did not understand was that a fundamental part of the grants and the commitment to the bilingual programs included attendance in these after-school programs where the students could find the extra help and attention to their studies; something that the non migrant students had as a usual consequence of their rural lifestyles. The grants also supported the expense of the extra transportation. Since most of the migrant workers were scheduled into the second shift at the meat packing

plant, it precluded their helping their children with homework when the children arrived home after school. As one teacher reported:

> ... From what I pick up from my family and those around here, a lot of people think that the Hispanic kids are getting a lot of things that the other kids don't get. That's kind-of the attitude I see, I hear. You know, like, special programs and things like that. I don't know, the bus picking them up to take them home following the after-school program. "The regular kids don't have that" - that type of thing.

Other programs included supplying breakfast, lunch and immunizations. It was noted by the PreK-K principal, however, that these particular programs were not exclusively for the migrant students. Any student could apply for these resources and benefits which were funded and sponsored on the federal level. Because the community was rural and agrarian, the residents were eligible for many of the "migrant/agricultural" program benefits from the federal government. This distinction was often lost, dismissed, or simply not mentioned in the discussions among the teachers and the community at large.

Such attitudes and programs made it difficult at times for the two disparate groups of students to bridge the cultural and social chasms. However, when in the confines of the school buildings, for the most part the students tried to set aside those community attitudes and beliefs and concentrate on building social relationships with their peers. The teachers and the administrators also concentrated on the social inclusion of the migrant students. In fact, it was one of the priorities especially for a few of the elementary teachers.

> Social inclusion, I think, especially for Hispanic kids is real important because we have a lot of prejudice here. When you are coming from a small, all-white community and with everyone sort of having the same background, and you're bring a whole different culture and kids that speak a different language. I don't know. It's interesting. Comments that two years ago that I heard fourth graders say made my skin crawl. And you knew it had to be coming from home.

Moderate Successes

Their social inclusion efforts were affirmed by the elementary principal who amplified this agenda, remarking that many of the teachers took a proactive approach to the migrant students coming into the schools and into their classrooms. Knowing that they were to have these new children in their classes, some of the teachers "... went to the store and bought a dictionary that had the Spanish and the interpretation of it in English, trying to check out for themselves how to, you know, if they could understand it, the Spanish." Her belief was that initially the migrant children needed to learn survival skills, meaning the social practices and procedures of how schooling was accomplished in their new venues. Following the processes of socialization to the functions of the school, the students and the teachers were to concentrate on the academic issues and the processes of learning English. While there was a bilingual program in place at this later time, it had its own set of difficulties and was in a state of

continual change as the director shifted the focus and the emphasis according to her changing perceptions of the processes of second language acquisition.

The programs in the three schools designed to acculturate the migrant students seemed to be meeting with some success. The primary tools were inservices that addressed intercultural communications, cross-cultural activities in the classrooms and outside the classes, and instructional strategies focused on establishing communities of learners more than an emphasis on ESL methodology. The effect was that the amount and the degree of disparaging remarks decreased significantly while at the same time the social inclusion of both groups of students was evidenced in several of the established programs in the schools. This was particularly so in such activities as chorus, band and in some sports programs, especially in the Junior/Senior high grades. In the community, the migrant parents organized a soccer "league" to provide cultural and social support for their students. One high school administrator was exploring the possibilities of establishing a soccer program within the school's sports program as a venue for social inclusion. She believed that it would provide an opportunity for the migrant students to excel and at the same time to enjoin with the non migrant students in building social relations through teamwork and challenges on the playing field.

The principal of the Junior/Senior high was a recent hire after the migrant students began to matriculate. His experience level in adjudicating differences contributed to the smoothing of social relations within that particular age group. His beliefs were based on a philosophy that an awareness of multicultural paradigms and pluralistic ideology was necessary for disparate groups to begin to integrate. Problems arose due to misunderstandings of the intentions and the actions of Others, but were approached with proactive measures to ameliorate the confusion. Within the first two weeks of his tenure, there were numerous fights.

> It was only because both groups were fearful of each other and didn't know how to take care of that, didn't know how to communicate, and didn't even have a means of getting over that language barrier. We held some conferences, mediations and brought in mediators, interpreters where we allowed the kids to air their differences and their concerns. They were all legitimate concerns. They didn't know what each other were all about. They generally interpreted students' other actions and even speech as being antagonistic. They wouldn't know what two kids were saying, if they were down the hall speaking in Spanish or in another language. They were thinking they were talking about them and in a mean way. So, we had to get over that.

The process of mediation involved identifying a core group of students from each cohort to represent and express their concerns before a panel of mediators. The facilitation of this process was grounded in the belief that in order to establish a social climate conducive to building a cohesive community of students within the Junior/Senior high building, both cohorts must necessarily begin the processes of giving and receiving respect and understanding. Once the students knew that differences could and would be addressed, there was a noticeable decrease in the tensions and the conflicts between the two disparate groups. As the school year progressed, the social integration of the students was more evident in many contexts across the socio-academic spectrum.

Conclusions and Implications

The data revealed an obvious purpose and coherence in the operation of the school; that it was organized and orchestrated by an active community of teachers, by students' input, through administrative proaction and parent involvement towards the goal of inclusion and social justice for the migrant students. Most of the students were able to establish meaningful relationships socially and academically with many of their teachers on a surface level that afforded them a modicum of relief from the stresses and pressures of integrating into the social context of the schools. They were supported and nurtured towards success in their education, and in their socialization to the culture of the school through the planned policies and programs of teachers and administrators. The students' identities were expressed primarily in terms of Self and Others, temporary and marginalized, and rarely were identified as integral to the "student body." The students attempted to maintain their individualnesses in the social context and yet enjoin the school population. Many were well acquainted with several of their teachers, and were on good terms with some of the administrators. The teachers found a supportive environment in their efforts to (re)organize the classroom contexts to meet the students' sociocultural and instructional needs, and found that they had a productive and rewarding working situation in most instances. In short, the social context and the cultural climate of the school were derived from an admixture of the attitudes and ideas of the community of learners established in the schools, through the leadership of the site-based managed district, and from the rural community in which they were situated. Progress towards social justice within these strictures and paradigms was slow, but steadily advanced so that the rights and the responsibilities of all students were accounted for and respected.

The families with their children who were visible in the community and the schools contributed much to the social integration process. The naturalness of families together invoked a universal empathy among the townspeople who could identify with and relate to such phenomena. In the classrooms, the students were very eager to please, to fit into the social milieu of the class and of the school. This was not atypical of new students in unfamiliar contexts.

With the globalization of society comes the need for understanding of the sociocultural dynamics of rapid and sometimes chaotic change. The schools in this Illinois community are a clear example of a community and its schools undergoing change as a result of this globalization. A significant part of this change was the (re)organization of the social climate conducive to teaching and learning and the purposeful attention to the dynamics and characteristics of social justice. While this project provided a deeper understanding of the importance of social justice in forming and reforming institutions and relationships, there is still much to know of how migrant and immigrant students affect their classrooms in terms of pedagogy, student-teacher interactions, attitudes regarding languages and cultures, and in terms of shifts in curriculum and materials to accommodate these new students. Other schools caught in the same wage-labour trends have the potential to contribute to this growing body of research.

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